

# Reflections

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## Mary, Full of Love

The first title which the Gospel gives to Mary is that of “full of grace.” Having found grace before God means having been “favored” by his gifts: by those gifts which He doles out through his own generosity. And these gifts are ultimately one: his love. “Full of grace” is then “full of love.” I believe it would be good for all of us to renew our love while looking at an attractive model. And this model could be the Blessed Virgin.

Mary is the woman full of love. Her life proves that is true because what characterizes her most is that She lives in full communion of love, not only with God, but also with mankind. In the Annunciation, this communion of love is extended to all humanity: Mary accepts being the Mother of the Messiah, the Savior of mankind. Thus appears the Virgin from the first scenes of the Gospel, attached by deep bonds of love to concrete persons: to Joseph, to Jesus, to Elizabeth and Zacary, to the bride and groom at Cana, to the disciples.

The Lord was always with Mary. From the very instant in which she was conceived, He filled her with his grace and his love. Therefore, Mary is also “the Immaculata,” the one without sin..... because sin is man’s “no” to love and there would never have been room for that in her heart. To sin is to say no to the two basic commandments of the Gospel: to the love for God and to the love for one’s neighbor. It is to refuse to be children and to be brothers and sisters. It is rupturing the communion to the height and to the breadth, isolating oneself and withdrawing into one’s own self, into one’s pride, selfishness, ambition or vanity.

The salvation of Jesus Christ – as it is resplendent in Mary – begins through the liberation of sin and returns to communion in love. What is decisive is the first moment it takes place in the interior of the human heart: the openness to love, the victory over selfishness and pride. The one who has decided in his heart for love, to live in communion with God and mankind, he is already saved. He is already liberated: liberated from solitude, from anxiety, from bitterness and self-destruction which produces isolation within oneself.

But salvation and that communion must grow, they must project themselves beyond the pure heart. The final stage of this process will be in Heaven. There our body will also be liberated forever from the effects of sin: from pain, sickness and death.

By her attitude, Mary teaches us that love motivates to be in solidarity and to share. She shares her life and her goods with Joseph. She shares with Jesus his mission, with Elizabeth, her domestic chores, with the bride and groom of Cana, their concern. Her love has become communion of life and goods, in communion of destinies and tasks, in communion with joy and affliction.

Because she is Mother, Mary possesses a charism, a special gift for uniting the hearts and opening them to love, to make us brothers and sisters.

And Mary also wants to send us to create an atmosphere of unity and love. She asks us to create it, to cultivate it and to permanently bring it to perfection in our homes, in our places of work, in our neighborhoods and in our groups. And She invites us, likewise, to build together a society more in solidarity and manifesting it in real help to those who suffer, to those who depend on us and to those who approach us.

Let us ask the Blessed Virgin to help us liberate ourselves from all that – in the heart of each one of us – opposes love. May She give us the strength to overcome in ourselves sin and selfishness which separates us from others and destroys unity. May Mary open our hearts to love, to communion with God and with our brothers and sisters, just as Jesus taught and lived.

### Questions for reflection

1. What is my relationship to the Virgin Mary like?
2. Am I a community person?

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